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## A Meditation.

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**1 Cor. 1: 18.** "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness ; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God."

The word of the cross was to them that were perishing foolishness and a stumbling-block. One class of hearers demanded words of wisdom, the other sought for signs. Paul gave neither, but presented in their stead the story of a man discredited and disgraced in his death.

His message was neither oracular nor spectacular. The modern preacher frequently seeks to be both. Witness the effort of the pulpit to be up to date in science, politics, literature, sociology, until the editor of our morning paper asks us why we do not preach the gospel. Witness the assertion of a man that his success is the evident demonstration of the truth of his theory. Witness the skill and zeal of the professional revivalist with his spectacular methods.

Paul, in weakness and in much trembling and in fear, approached a city full of enterprising and curious people with the story of a crucified man, asserting it to be the power of God and the wisdom of God. Was it? Is it? Why? Back of the foolishness of this stumbling-block message is God. Twenty-six times in this connection, in the first two chapters, does the name of God occur. The base, foolish, weak thing becomes therefrom the instrument of the Almighty.

In its relation to God the word of the cross becomes a word of love. It is a message to the heart of humanity. The way of the cross is beside the way of the lowliest in the time of his direst need. The lost man cannot therefore miss it, and it leads him to hear first that which he most needs to know, that God loves him.

The word of the cross is a word of hope. If Jesus could fall into such shame on the cross and reach such glory as the Christ, they of whose flesh he became may venture to hope that through him they also may rise.

The word of the cross is a word of help. For he who was crucified as Jesus now lives as Christ, able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through him. Love, hope, and help are in the word of the cross. These make it the power and wisdom of God, more excellent than our wisdom, more marvelous than any sign we can work.

MARION STEVENSON.